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Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/166 of 14 December 2000, the present report describes the financial and material assistance provided by the United Nations system to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in its economic recovery and reconstruction process.

II. General situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

2. The Democratic Republic of the Congo covers an area of 2,345,000 square kilometres, which makes it the third-largest country in Africa. The country is bounded by nine others: the Republic of the Congo to the north-west, the Central African Republic to the north, the Sudan to the north-east, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania to the east, Zambia to the south-east and Angola to the south-west. On the far west it has a small stretch of coastline on the Atlantic. The landscape is dominated by a vast central basin (covering 47 per cent of the territory), around which the land rises gradually (from 500 to 1,500 metres in altitude) and ultimately reaches impressive heights of over 1,500 metres in the eastern part of the country.

3. Growing at an average rate of 3.1 per cent annually, the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is estimated to have exceeded 52 million at the end of 2000 and is expected to reach 80 million by 2015. The population is very unevenly distributed and heavily concentrated in urban areas, which since 1975 have accounted for over 30 per cent of the total. The country has perhaps 10 cities with from 100,000 to 600,000 inhabitants. The capital, Kinshasa, accounts for about 6 million of the 15 million urban dwellers.

4. For more than four years the country has been undergoing a major crisis due to successive wars. The first of these erupted in the eastern part of the country in 1996 and brought down the Mobutu regime on 17 May 1997. A little more than a year later, on 2 August 1998, another war broke out, again in the eastern part of the country. This conflict, in which three rebel

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movements, supported by the regular forces of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, are pitted against the central Government, which has requested and received assistance from Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe (members of the Southern African Development Community), has proved to be even deadlier and more destructive (over 2 million persons killed and 1.8 million displaced), in part because it has resulted in the de facto partition of the country into separate administrative areas, depending on which party to the conflict controls the particular territory.

5. Despite the ongoing conflict, several attempts were made to reorganize the political structure of the country in the areas under the control of the Government, though not without dissent. New political parties were approved and allowed to function under the decree-laws promulgated in 1999 on the organization and operation of political parties and associations and the regulation of non-profit organizations. In 2000 the Government also established a constituent and legislative assembly — transition parliament, whose members were appointed with the mandate, among other things, of drafting a new constitution to be submitted to a popular referendum.

6. However, most of those involved in politics, as well as the international community, viewed those actions on the part of the Government as an attempt to bypass the inter-Congolese dialogue arising out of the Ceasefire Agreement signed on 10 July 1999 in Lusaka at the initiative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Ceasefire Agreement provides for a procedure for peaceful resolution of the conflict and the restoration of peace. The procedure involves, among other things, the sending of a neutral military observer mission under the auspices of the United Nations, the opening of inter-Congolese political negotiations leading to the establishment of a new institutional order, the sending of a United Nations interposition force and the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces. The Security Council, which authorized the deployment of military liaison officers starting in August 1999, by resolution 1279 (1999) of 30 November 1999 established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

7. Rapid implementation of the Lusaka Agreement was impeded by problems caused by the belligerents and arising even among allies, the most blatant being the second confrontation between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in Kisangani from 5 to 10 June 2000, which suddenly altered the face of the war, and the rejection by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila's Government of the facilitator designated for the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, together with that Government's expressed intention to revise the Ceasefire Agreement.

8. Major General Joseph Kabila, who became President on 25 January 2001, has reassured the nation and the international community by expressing openness and a desire for peace and by his policy of facilitating the deployment of MONUC troops, disengagement of forces on the front line and the work of the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire. This turn of events has enabled MONUC to deploy its troops in several areas on both sides of the front. With regard to the inter-Congolese dialogue, the signing of the Declaration of Fundamental Principles of the Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations in Lusaka on 4 May 2001 by the Government and the two rebel movements is a step in the right direction.

9. The achievements of the regional summit held on 15 February 2001 in Lusaka and the meetings of the Security Council with the Political Committee for the Implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement on 21 and 22 February 2001 in New York revived hopes for progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The parties committed themselves to the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment of forces, signed in April and December 2000, respectively. From 15 to 26 May, a major Security Council mission visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other countries in the Great Lakes region and held important consultations on the future of the peace process.

10. The Security Council, by resolution 1355 (2001), extended the mandate of MONUC until 15 June 2002 and called upon all parties to comply with the relevant United Nations resolutions relating to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly concerning the withdrawal of foreign forces and the disengagement of forces and other belligerents in accordance with the Harare sub-plans. Thanks to its "peace barge" project, MONUC has succeeded in reopening the Congo River to navigation and to launch some of its quick-impact projects, including the resumption of activity in Mbandaka, Kalemie,

Kisangani, Goma, Kabinda and Kinshasa. In addition, a dialogue has been started on a regional level between President Joseph Kabila and leaders of neighbouring countries, particularly Uganda and Rwanda. In that context, a tripartite meeting was organized on the initiative of the Secretary-General, when he attended the OAU summit in Lusaka in July of this year.

11. Because the ceasefire has been holding in recent weeks and the Government has shown its willingness to make an effort to restart the economy and resume international cooperation, optimism has grown about the chances of bringing the conflict to an end.

12. Despite its enormous potential and the favourable economic situation it enjoyed in the early 1960s, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now in a difficult economic, financial and social situation. This vast territory, which has immense natural resources (mineral, agricultural, forestry, energy and other), continues to have some of the lowest social indicators in the world and is among the poorest countries in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report 2001*, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ranks 142nd out of the 164 countries evaluated with a human development index of 0.430, among the lowest in the world.

13. The gloomy economic picture, very evident in 1999, deteriorated further in 2000 and the first quarter of 2001. The macroeconomic environment continues to show the effects of the conflict, which has caused production to shrink sharply, and of some government measures taken while President Laurent-Désiré Kabila was in office which have proved to be harmful. Despite new measures taken to adjust course, the new Government has inherited runaway inflation, monetary instability, a persistent fiscal deficit, a very heavy external debt and a climate of great social tension.

14. The latest economic liberalization measures taken by the country's new administration in the first quarter of 2001, consisting of the publication of new foreign exchange regulations authorizing the possession of foreign currencies and their use in commercial transactions, liberalization of the diamond industry and the expressed willingness to collaborate with the Bretton Woods institutions, have encouraged the country's development partners. The Government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are already working on an interim macroeconomic stabilization programme.

III. Economic situation

15. Economic activity declined from 1997 to 2000, especially over the past two years. Gross domestic product (GDP) underwent a cumulative drop of 21.9 per cent during the period 1997-2000, an average annual decline of 5.3 per cent. The decline in activity during that period was observed in all sectors of the economy. Agriculture, which makes up over 50 per cent of GDP, accounted for 41.1 per cent of the decline in GDP, while manufacturing accounted for 17.8 per cent, services 38.4 per cent and duties and taxes 2.7 per cent. The collapsed economic growth during these years reflects the negative impact of observed trends in the level of the main components of domestic demand. Household consumption accounted for over 90 per cent of the decline in GDP during the period.

A. Inflation and exchange rate

16. The average annual inflation rate from 1997 to 2000 was 212.4 per cent based on the consumer price index as calculated by the country's central bank. That was still an extremely high level of inflation, although lower than the rate during the period 1993-1996, when it reached record levels (averaging 1,984 per cent annually and reaching 9,796.9 per cent in the year 1994). The high rate of inflation from 1997 to 2000 and during the preceding periods is one of the factors leading to the breakdown of the financial system.

17. Because of its outward orientation, the country's economy is heavily dependent on export revenues and inflows of external capital. In a context of worsening government deficits and loose money creation, brought to a halt only a few weeks ago, the decline in the supply of foreign currency has had the effect of destabilizing the foreign exchange market. The market has been overwhelmed by the continual depreciation of the national currency with respect to foreign currencies and the widening gap between the official and unofficial rates of exchange. After appreciating by 8.1 per cent against the United States dollar by the end of December 1997, the rate of exchange of the national currency has depreciated for the past three years by 69.4 percent (1998), 85.9 percent (1999) and 81.9 percent (2000), respectively. To soften the impact of frequent depreciations of the exchange rate on the prices of goods and services and limit the effect on the State budget of wages indexed to the rate of exchange,

since the second half of 1998 the Government has managed the interbank exchange rate. As a result of this policy, the gap between the official and unofficial exchange rates widened from 3.8 per cent at the end of December 1997 to 466.7 per cent and 182.0 per cent at the end of 1999 and 2000, respectively.

B. Monetary situation

18. The monetary situation has been marked by exponential growth in the rate of formation of domestic liquidity, with deleterious effects on domestic prices and the exchange rate. Driven by domestic credit, chiefly government credit, the money supply grew by 51.9 per cent in 1997, 157.8 per cent in 1998, 363.3 per cent in 1999 and 533.2 per cent in 2000. The rate of money creation in 1997 was the lowest for the period because public finances were then sound.

C. External account and external debt

19. With regard to the external account, the economic situation has been marked by a downward trend in both exports and imports and a considerable reduction in trade surpluses. The country's export volume shrank from $1,448,900,000 in 1997 to $792,700,000 in 2000. The current transactions deficit averaged 4.5 per cent of GDP during the period 1997-2000, the overall balance of payments deficit 8.6 per cent.

20. As at 30 June 2000, the country's stock of external debt stood at $12.3 billion, and the arrears on the debt, both interest and principal, equalled $8.7 billion. The stock of debt averaged 241.2 per cent of GDP from 1997 to 1999, while the servicing on the debt rose from 479.6 per cent to 830.1 per cent of exports of goods and services.

D. Official development assistance

21. In 1999 the Democratic Republic of the Congo received $194,758,000, as against $140,203,000 in 1998, an increase of 39 per cent. This upturn reversed the downward trend in assistance to the country observable since 1996, with declines of -48 per cent in 1997 and -46 per cent in 1998. The upturn was attributable to multilateral aid, which increased by 37 per cent in 1999, particularly from the United Nations system (up 37 per cent) and the European Union (up 36 per cent). The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have continued to limit their support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to fact-finding and evaluation missions, the costs of which are hard to estimate. Bilateral aid, on the other hand, declined by 50.54 per cent from $45.5 million to $22.5 million.

22. Despite the upturn, official development assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains trammelled by the same factors that have operated for a decade, namely: (i) continuation of the freeze on structural cooperation between the country and most of its major external partners that has lasted since 1991, following the unfortunate pillaging that occurred in the years 1991 to 1993; (ii) a wait-and-see attitude on the part of donors, despite the initiation of a macroeconomic dialogue as discussed above, in the light of the two wars the country has recently experienced, the first in 1996 and 1997 and the second beginning in August 1998. In implementing its interim programme, the Government thus faces a serious problem of external financing, which is essential in view of the country's meagre domestic resources and the unresolved problem of its external debt arrears, which stands in the way of conventional official development assistance mechanisms. Humanitarian aid has thus remained the preferred form of assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Between 1998 and 1999 humanitarian aid increased by 29 per cent, accounting for 39 per cent of the total in 1999. However that percentage is lower than in previous years, when it accounted for 76.8 per cent, 64.03 per cent and 46.41 per cent of the total in 1996, 1997 and 1998, respectively.

E. Social and humanitarian situation

23. Continuing negative economic growth has made serious inroads in the production of social goods and services in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With shrinking State resources and the fall in official development assistance, the lowest levels of spending have been in health and education. With few exceptions, the social and humanitarian situation continues to be characterized by the factors mentioned in the previous report, namely:

(a) The low percentage of public expenditure on the social sector due to the termination of all bilateral cooperation:

(i) Spending on the health sector fell from 0.8 per cent of GNP in 1990 to 0.02 per cent in 1998, compared with an average of 1.8 per cent of GNP for sub-Saharan Africa. It made up 0.3 per cent of overall spending in 1998, compared with 3.9 per cent in 1990; as a result, there has been a resurgence of diseases which had earlier been under control, such as trypanosomiasis, tuberculosis and leprosy, and which are to blame for an incredibly high mortality rate;

(ii) Education spending remained at about 0.1 per cent of GNP between 1990 and 1998. The average for sub-Saharan Africa and that for the developing countries in 1998 stood at just under 5 per cent and 3 per cent of GNP respectively;

(b) An under-five mortality rate fluctuating around 207 per thousand live births, whereas the average for countries with low levels of human development stood at 169 per thousand in 1997. The maternal mortality rate rose to 1,870 per 100,000 live births;

(c) Life expectancy at birth of 51.2 years in 1998 (52.7 years for women and 49.6 years for men) as compared with 53 years in 1987. This decline is due to an increase in mortality: infant mortality rose from 127 to 137 per 1,000 live births, the under-five mortality from 213 to 220 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality from 1,870 to 2,000 per 100,000 live births. These unusually high rates reflect a serious human/demographic disaster overshadowed by the impact of the war. It is estimated that: (i) of the 2,360,000 to 2,500,000 babies born each year, over 203,000 die during their first week of life, over 323,000 before their first birthday and over 518,000 before their fifth birthday; (ii) between 47,000 and 50,000 women die every year in childbirth, including over 6,000 in the capital Kinshasa; and (iii) the unusually high number of maternal deaths is due in part to illegal abortions that often result in death (30 per cent of girls under the age of 19, or roughly 700,000 girls aged between 12 and 19 years, have abortions);

(d) An educational enrolment ratio in 1997 of 39 per cent (an overall figure, including all levels of schooling), compared with averages of 59 per cent for the developing countries and 44 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa;

(e) An adult literacy rate of 58.9 per cent (41 per cent for women and 71.3 per cent for men) in 1998, as compared with 62 per cent in 1985;

(f) The fact that a considerable proportion of the population does not have access to basic services: 41 per cent to health care; 58 per cent to safe drinking water; 82 per cent to health services;

(g) Continuing and unchecked population movements caused by the war and the considerable increase in the number of displaced people, especially in North and South Kivu where there are more than a million displaced persons, not counting the unknown numbers of people hiding in the forests;

(h) A very disturbing increase in unemployment: statistics on the numbers of public servants and private-sector workers show a fall of 36.1 per cent in employment in these two sectors; the overall figure for public- and private-sector employees fell from 928,500 units in 1997 to 593,300 units in 1999.

24. Given the immensity of the crisis reflected in these indicators, we can only conclude this part of the report in the same terms as the previous one, emphasizing the urgent need to restore peace and to prepare and implement a national poverty alleviation plan for those population groups that cannot automatically benefit from a resumption of economic growth, but also to continue humanitarian assistance pending a real economic upturn which will give all the country's people the chance to take a hand in improving their own situation. The plan would take into account the concerns of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, including women, children, unemployed youth and persons infected with HIV/AIDS.

IV. Economic measures and options

25. The developments described above were essentially the result of the difficult wartime situation, exacerbated by policies which showed their limitations by seeking to regulate the entire economy. In his inaugural speech, the new Head of State responded to this situation by saying that in the age of globalization, the country's economy must be liberalized and opened up to foreign capital in order to increase domestic output and diversify exports. An interim programme was adopted for this purpose, with a view to restoring

some measure of macroeconomic stability and ensuring the necessary profitability and security for attracting foreign investments and for a fruitful dialogue with foreign partners on the thorny issue of the country's external debt.

26. The main goal of the interim programme is to break the inflationary spiral and put a stop to the current distortions in the economy, through a tight budgetary policy and a monetary policy compatible with the chosen goals. As to reform measures, the programme calls for the following:

(a) Foreign-exchange policy: Decree-Law No. 004/2001 of 31 January 2001 and the new foreign-exchange regulations confirm the liberalization in this area; the interbank exchange rate will gradually be raised, reducing the disparity with the parallel rate;

(b) Mining and investment policies: (i) a new mining industry code is being prepared, with a view to setting up a tax system compatible with the realities of today's mining industry; (ii) the liberalization of the diamond sector is being completed, abolishing the monopoly which had existed in the sector and restoring the role of purchasing offices; (iii) the new investment code currently under review tends to confirm the basic choice of a social market economy which distinguishes the economic roles to be played by the main social partners (the State, the private sector and civil society);

(c) Prices policy: the regime remains that contained in Decree-Law No. 83/026 of 12 September 1983, which provided for price liberalization, subject to a posteriori monitoring; exceptions were made for a few goods and services considered to be socially sensitive such as water, electric power, fuel and public transport, for which prior approval is required.

V. Situation and challenges relating to governance

27. Throughout 2000, the country struggled to achieve peace and internal consensus. Various initiatives towards that consensus proved unsuccessful, particularly the national consultation initiated by the heads of religious groups, which was intended as a forum for dialogue and reconciliation. The purpose of that consultation, held from 29 February to 11 March and attended by representatives of civil society and of opinion groups, was to prepare the way for the inter-Congolese political talks provided for in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. However, the recommendations produced by the consultation remained without effect; also unsuccessful were the attempts by President Laurent Kabila to convene an inter-Congolese meeting in Libreville, under the leadership of President Omar Bongo, in order to establish a patriotic front, isolate the aggressors and carry on regardless of the Lusaka Agreement.

28. President Joseph Kabila agreed that Sir Ketumile Masire should continue with his task as an impartial facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue. Thus, the Government withdrew the preconditions it had set out, particularly the demand that foreign armed forces should withdraw before any dialogue could begin. On 17 May 2001, in order to consolidate that positive move, President Kabila promulgated Act No. 001/2001 on political parties, superseding Act No. 194 of 17 July 1999, which had been widely criticized in Congolese political circles. On the basis of the declaration of basic principles signed on 4 May in Lusaka by all the parties, the process of selecting provincial representatives was effectively begun by the Facilitator, with a view to convening a preparatory committee scheduled to meet on 20 August 2001, which will discuss inter alia various aspects of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

29. The continuing conflict has had a disastrous impact on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Bukavu, the tension between the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) and the general population was worsened by the forcible exile in February 2000 of Bishop Emmanuel Kataliko, accused of preaching tribal hatred. The measure was rescinded in September 2000, but the bishop died shortly thereafter and his death led to a further deterioration in relations between the population and the rebel movement.

30. Beginning in January 2000, the Ituri district in Orientale province became the theatre of violent inter-ethnic clashes, aggravated by the presence of armed groups; the death toll was between 5,000 and 7,000 and 180,000 persons were displaced. Following an initial mediation effort, a fragile peace reigned in Ituri until December. Struggles within the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération (RCD/ML) rebel movement then brought about a new cycle of violence, which remained unobserved because security issues had forced humanitarian agencies to leave the area. That lack of security culminated in the

murder of six International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) workers in April 2001.

31. The situation has remained particularly worrisome in the eastern provinces, owing to the activities of armed groups, ceasefire violations and ethnic tensions, but also the economic and humanitarian crisis afflicting the population. The United Nations should consider implementing measures to respond to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which will follow the withdrawal of foreign armed forces which are currently responsible for the security of the civilian population in the areas they control. The Security Council has expressed serious concern at the continuing illegal exploitation of the country's plentiful resources, and has decided to extend the mandate of the expert group dealing with that issue, in order to follow up the first report which was produced in April 2000.

32. Aside from violations resulting directly from the conflict, the year 2000 saw a number of examples of illegal arrest and detention, attacks on press freedom and the freedom of association and other acts committed by both the central Government and the rebel movements. Although the signature of a general amnesty decree led to the freeing of many prisoners, particularly in Kinshasa, the arrests continued thereafter and the decree was only partially implemented.

33. The prospects for the human rights situation improved markedly when the new President, Joseph Kabila, took office. Among his first acts as Head of State were the closure of all places of detention not under the authority of the public prosecutors, and the convening of the national conference on human rights (24-29 June 2001) with the participation of 385 delegates representing the country's various provinces and 30 observers from within and outside the country. This conference set priorities in the human rights field in order to initiate the needed reforms, particularly in the area of civil and military justice, including the security forces. The national human rights charter and the national plan of action for the promotion and protection of human rights were also adopted.

34. In conclusion, it is clear that after the long period of apparent immobility which followed the deployment of MONUC in September 1999, there have been significant changes since the beginning of 2001. The turbulent events which have taken place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however tragic, have changed the situation in a relatively positive way. There is now relative calm along the confrontation lines between the various armed forces on the ground, and the Government has agreed that Sir Ketumile Masire should play his part as the impartial facilitator in the inter-Congolese dialogue. The obstacles to be overcome for this dialogue to succeed include (i) the issue of the representation of political parties which are not only very numerous (over 200) but, more importantly, divided into several mutually antagonistic wings; and (ii) the issue of representation of RCD, which is currently divided into two wings, one of which, RCD/ML, has allied itself with the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC).

VI. Situation and challenges of sustainable economic and human development

35. The previous report noted that the situation was worsening year by year, and described challenges in the area of sustainable human development resulting from the chronic instability of the country's political, economic, social and security environment. That observation was elaborated upon and systematized in the first national human development report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, prepared by a team of independent national consultants and published with the assistance of UNDP.

36. The report focuses on governance, that is, the responsibility of the State for sustainable human development. Their study of the human development process since the country gained its independence in 1960 leads the authors to maintain that the State has not properly exercised its authority to ensure: (i) positive partnership with civil society as a series of groups participating in economic, political, social and cultural activities; (ii) a political, legal and macroeconomic environment conducive to productive activities and the security of goods and persons; (iii) support for the private sector as a generator of employment and income; and (iv) a culture of respect for the public interest, guaranteeing the rehabilitation of political life which had been characterized by corruption and impunity. This failure on the part of the State is attributable to both short-term and structural factors.

37. In order to describe the inadequacies of the State and of governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1960 to 1999, the report assesses sustainable human development on the basis of data relating to the following criteria:

(a) **Access to basic social services** (health, education and employment). The report notes that, despite the liberalization policy adopted in respect of school management and health training, access to health care and education remains insufficient. The quality of teaching and the school enrolment rate have declined steadily. Endemic diseases which have reappeared and spread include diarrhoea, cholera, meningitis, HIV/AIDS, schistosomiasis, tuberculosis, respiratory diseases and sleeping sickness, which have played a greater part in steeply rising mortality than the conflict itself. This is because the liberalization policy has given rise to adverse effects, particularly concerning the residual responsibility of the State for basic infrastructures in the administration of primary health care and in basic education. The report expresses still greater concern regarding the employment situation: the job creation rate appears to be zero, particularly in the modern sector. The civil service and State-owned enterprises are the largest employers, and with their pervasive overmanning problems they are thought to be reaching saturation level. The pension system is highly unreliable, there are no systems of health insurance or worker protection, and the trade union movement has been considerably weakened by workers' lack of bargaining power on the labour market.

(b) **Quality of living conditions** (habitat, housing, environment). The report describes the badly deteriorated condition of living spaces for the country's people. Quality of life is declining in urban areas, with losses of housing and of human lives caused by erosion, siltation and flooding; general insalubrity owing to the lack of appropriate solid and liquid waste management systems; severe overcrowding caused both by the population explosion and by uncontrollable concentrations of population; physical and chemical degradation of land; pollution of all kinds; and above all, deforestation on the periphery of urban areas. The rapid growth of urban population has led to a rise in demand for urban services such as housing, transport infrastructure, water supplies, schools and hospitals, which is a further challenge to the authorities in their task of providing basic infrastructure. However, the report describes two major problems regarding the administrative organization of communes, towns or territories, in terms of urban planning, public works, roads and drainage, etc.: extremely high levels of centralization, depriving officials at the local level of any financial or material means to act; and a dysfunctional dualism between the "environmental protection" and "nature conservation" aspects of government policy. According to the report, the "environmental protection" aspect suffers from the negative effects of that dual structure.

(c) **Involvement by citizens in the management of public affairs**. The report notes that, owing to poor governance, that involvement is at a very low level in the country and therefore cannot contribute any impetus to sustainable human development. Taking the situation of women as an example, the report notes that women have been used for purposes of propaganda and partisan mobilization, rather than treated as fully fledged citizens. Despite the granting to women of the right to vote and stand for election, the creation of ministerial posts for the advancement of women and the appointment of women as government ministers, the social situation of women remains deplorable. Although the enrolment rate for girls has risen steadily since 1960, particularly in universities and other establishments of higher education, in 1999 it was still lower than the rate for boys. As to health, the situation of women is a matter for even greater concern owing to precarious conditions for childbirth and the rise in sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

38. The report concludes that the human underdevelopment observed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is intrinsically linked to poor governance at the economic and political levels. At the political level, the report highlights the fraught relations between the State and civil society resulting from a systemic personalization of power and extreme centralization of State structures. According to the report, the same tensions are apparent between the State and the economic sphere. Poor management of finances and public corporations has not been conducive to the creation of a favourable macroeconomic and institutional environment for stimulating the economic and social activities of households and enterprises. The report concludes by proposing ways forward that should facilitate the restoration of an administration based on the rule of

law, administrative decentralization, participatory democracy and partnership with civil society and the private sector.

VII. Cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations system

39. The continuation of armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2000 for a third consecutive year has further exacerbated the tragic social and economic situation. Judging from the number of persons displaced by the conflict (which rose from 480,000 in November 1999 to almost 2,100,000 in June 2001), the situation has worsened, pointing to the need for greater resources and increased humanitarian activity. Regrettably, international cooperation, whether bilateral or multilateral, remains dependent on progress in the political sphere, particularly on implementation of the Lusaka Agreements. Thus, most partners have established humanitarian assistance programmes to be delivered by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Against the current background of limited resources, United Nations system agencies have continued their cooperation programmes by focusing much of their action on humanitarian activities to benefit the most vulnerable groups. Development efforts have focused on the various aspects of poverty reduction including in the fields of health, agriculture, local development and employment generation, HIV/AIDS control and the promotion of good governance including human rights and national capacity-building.

40. Realization of United Nations system assistance has met with various obstacles which reduce its impact. An appropriate response to the crisis has been hampered by inadequate funding, and difficult access (mostly in the east of the country) to displaced persons for reasons of security. Following the refusal of permits, including by the Government, it has also been hampered by the excessive cost of air transport, which often remained the sole means of transport given the country's large expanse and the advanced state of disrepair of road infrastructure, and by poor telecommunications. Conditions of access have, however, improved thanks to the decision adopted in March 2001 by President Joseph Kabila to allow humanitarian agencies free access throughout the territory, which enabled them to gain access to thousands of persons in dire need; paradoxically, however, access in some areas, mostly in the east of the country, has been constrained due to the growing insecurity. Moreover, the lack of government machinery for coordinating official development assistance, and the absence of a coherent overall development plan, have not allowed for sustainable programming.

41. The efforts of United Nations agencies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also been severely thwarted by certain decisions of the national authorities, including the monetary measure which officially sets the national exchange rate, and the policy of dedollarization of the economy. This particular measure has resulted in a significant erosion of cooperation programme budgets, which thus reduces their expected impact on the ground. United Nations agencies at their request were authorized by the Government to apply a preferential exchange rate of 22.5 Congolese francs to the dollar for much of 2000. However, this preferential rate also proved rigid given the evolution of current exchange market conditions, and the widening gap with respect to the parallel rate prevented the implementation of significant development projects. The abolition in 2001 of the prohibition on the use and possession of dollars as well as the liberalization of the exchange rate will have a positive impact on the volume and extent of assistance which can be provided.

42. In the agricultural sector, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have collaborated on food security through an emergency agricultural project supplying foodstuffs in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, the country's two largest towns, which host many persons displaced by armed conflict. Support has been provided to market gardeners, in particular women, in the form of agricultural requisites and small tools. This intervention has enabled the year-long provision of vegetables and other produce to the population of these two towns, and some income generation for the producers. In the framework of an emergency agricultural programme in Bas-Congo, FAO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have developed synergies in their support for refugees, persons displaced by armed conflict and host populations: FAO supplying agricultural requisites,

WFP, foodstuffs, and UNHCR restoring various social infrastructures.

43. WFP has focused its interventions on emergency assistance operations (displaced persons, refugees and vulnerable groups). As part of assistance provided to displaced persons and vulnerable groups, more than 23,000 tons of foodstuffs were distributed between January 2000 and March 2001 to over a million persons, including 53 per cent children, 31 per cent women and 16 per cent men. Over the same period, nearly 70,000 refugees received some 7,000 tons of foodstuffs.

44. Throughout 2000, in accessible areas of the country, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable groups in the fields of food, health, child protection and assistance to displaced persons. In the field of health, 534 health facilities used by 4,400,000 people received emergency kits and essential medicines, while 700,000 children were vaccinated against measles throughout the country and 20,000 people in Goma and Kinshasa were inoculated against cholera. At the same time, eight health centres were reinstated in Kisangani. In the field of nutrition, 16,000 severely malnourished children in 53 nutrition centres located in Katanga and in the two Kivus received support in the form of therapeutic milk. In the field of education, eight schools were reinstated in Kisangani, and a temporary school for 800 pupils established in Kinshasa. School supplies were distributed to 20,000 refugee pupils in Bas-Congo. Some 40,000 displaced families in the two Kivus, Kisangani and Katanga received assistance in the form of essential supplies, and 4,400 baby kits were distributed to women who had just given birth in camps for displaced persons in Kinshasa, Bas-Congo, Kasai and Katanga.

45. In the field of health, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNDP helped to rehabilitate the health system in six health zones in the provinces of Bandundu, Bas-Congo and Katanga. These activities improved the population's access to health care. In addition to the restoration of infrastructure, health personnel in the targeted areas received training in epidemiological surveillance. This support also involved non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations in income-generating activities. A total of 11 micro-projects were supported, and 120 leaders and grass-roots facilitators were trained to manage them. They acquired such traditional skills as soap-making, fish-salting and bread-making. Initial appraisals noted a high degree of satisfaction among beneficiaries.

46. UNHCR has embarked on a programme of local integration of refugees in the Aru region of Orientale province, as well as the restoration of education and health infrastructure. In Katanga province, as part of its efforts to achieve the local integration of Angolan refugees, UNHCR has established an agricultural project which has been extended to include the indigenous population, thanks to seeds and agricultural tools contributed by FAO. This population benefits on the same basis as refugees from medical and school infrastructure built by UNHCR in refugee camps.

47. Local communities in the South and North Kivu provinces have benefited from a grass-roots development programme funded by UNDP and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). This support has facilitated the restoration of social infrastructure such as schools and health centres. It has also enabled vulnerable groups to benefit from small subsidies for income-generating activities.

48. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for its part, has been involved in efforts to combat illiteracy. With the collaboration of other United Nations agencies, it has pursued this particular form of poverty eradication by establishing literacy classes in working-class neighbourhoods in Kinshasa through a non-governmental organization known as the Philanthropic Association of Congo Mothers (Association Philanthropique des Mamans au Congo).

49. Immunization activities in the form of national immunization days have been realized through the establishment of a broad partnership which has brought WHO and UNICEF into consultation with agencies such as MONUC, WFP, UNHCR, UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). By the end of the operation, 10 million children under five years had been immunized against poliomyelitis, with a view to preventing transmission of the wild poliomyelitis virus and global eradication of the disease; 8.8 million children from 6 months to under 5 years had received a dose of vitamin A and 1.3 million children from 9 months to under 5 years had been immunized against measles. Most United Nations

system agencies were mobilized on the ground to ensure the success of the operation.

50. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WHO have embarked on joint activity to build the capacities of state structures in reproductive health, including to reduce maternal mortality. The popularization of "reproductive health" strategies has involved more than 300 health professionals and other targeted categories in 82 health areas located in seven of the country's provinces. In addition, 21 persons have been trained in the country and abroad in contraceptive techniques.

51. In all projects and programmes established by United Nations system agencies, particular attention has been accorded to the capacity-building of supported structures. A significant activity meriting attention is the training of more than 150 government and civil society-organization experts in disaster prevention and management. It was thus that from 8 November to 15 December 2000, UNDP, WHO, OCHA and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) organized — with the collaboration of the Government — a series of workshops on conflict prevention and management. The workshops covered the following themes: floods, erosion, industrial, chemical, technological and environmental accidents, epidemics, and internal conflicts and displaced persons.

52. The United Nations system has also been mobilized in efforts to control HIV/AIDS. In order to better articulate support in this area, the HIV/AIDS thematic group established several years ago has remained operational, despite the specific state of affairs in the country. The presence of several foreign armed forces from countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence, such as Uganda, has exacerbated an already highly worrying situation. It has become vital to raise awareness of all sectors of society, particularly decision makers and opinion leaders. To that end, the United Nations system has embarked on advocacy at all levels. UNICEF, in collaboration with other agencies, has supported the National Youth Forum by providing it with the tools to encourage young people to change behaviour.

53. The international week for poverty eradication whose 2000 theme was "Breaking the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS" also proved an ideal occasion for advocacy to the Government and entire population. From 16 to 24 October, targeted activities were organized by all United Nations system agencies with UNDP coordination. Special days were devoted to subthemes such as HIV/AIDS and the school environment, HIV/AIDS and trade unions, HIV/AIDS and the prison environment. Throughout the week, official speeches, theatrical plays, songs, etc. broadcast on radio and TV and given newspaper coverage brought the message home to the entire population. The active involvement of the United Nations system culminated in the hosting of five national participants at the African Development Forum organized in December 2000 in Addis Ababa by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on the theme of "AIDS — the Greatest Leadership Challenge". With a view to preparing the Government's contribution to the Forum, a national workshop bringing together all mechanisms involved in HIV/AIDS control was fully funded by United Nations system agencies, in particular by UNDP, UNICEF and WHO.

54. In a situation of civil war, particular attention must be accorded to human rights. In fact, the human rights situation on both sides of the firing line could not be more worrying. The United Nations system — led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights — has conducted human-rights protection, awareness-raising and training activities for local non-governmental organizations and human rights activists, including:

(a) Protection of vulnerable persons, of Tutsi origin or related, by a monitoring committee comprising, among others, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OCHA and ICRC. It has thus been possible to evacuate without hindrance nearly 2,000 persons to host countries;

(b) Inter-agency missions for the purposes of advocacy and support of various types have been effected in provinces under rebel control, including Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Kisangani. Visits have also been made to prisons in Goma, Bukavu and Bunia. In government-controlled territory, visits have been made to the Mbuji-Mayi prison, Kasaï-Oriental province and the Kinshasa Penitentiary and Re-education Centre. The most recent visit was held to coincide with the international week for poverty eradication. On this occasion, 9 tons of foodstuffs as well as medicines and books (contributed by agencies in the United Nations system) were made available to inmates;

(c) Support for the reuniting of families divided by armed conflict and for human rights monitoring in the provinces by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with the collaboration of MONUC;

(d) Collaboration between the Human Rights Section of MONUC and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, particularly in respect of support to government institutions and to civil society bodies through the following two seminars:

(i) Training seminar on human rights principles and protection mechanisms for 37 human rights activists in North and South Kivu provinces, Maniema and Orientale Province in August 2000;

(ii) Training seminar on the role of the lawyer in building a State based on the rule of law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo held in December 2000 and attended by 50 lawyers from government-controlled territories;

(e) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNHCR, MONUC and UNDP have supported activities to build the capacities of civil society in general and human rights NGOs. It was thus that the National Human Rights NGO Forum received support for establishing a national collaboration and consultation executive. Support was provided to NGO delegates and the Ministry for Human Rights to enable them to participate in the work of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights. A project for building the capacities of the Ministry for Human Rights was also prepared. Human rights NGOs from the town of Goma in North Kivu province were given support to organize a series of activities in the context of commemorations of the fifty-second anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(f) In December 2000, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDP in North and South Kivu provinces organized a joint project to support local peace initiatives. Under the project, 36 people from 18 territories in targeted provinces were trained in methods of conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as in human rights mechanisms and principles.

55. Furthermore, the drastic downwards spiralling of official development assistance following the deterioration since the early 1990s of relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its main development partners was most regrettable. The conference of the main development partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("Friends of Congo" meeting) in Brussels in December 1997 which jointly with the Government considered implementation possibilities for the emergency programme to boost and stabilize the country's economy and for the resumption of structural cooperation did not keep its commitments in that regard. The onset of war in August 1998 provided a further pretext for delaying the anticipated recovery.

56. Some of the country's partners having expressed a desire to re-establish their cooperation programmes, the various sectoral programmes prepared with the financial and technical support of United Nations specialized agencies will serve as support documents for resource mobilization and/or dialogue meetings (consultative groups, round tables, sectoral and thematic consultations) as needed. For the time being, only the European Union and Belgium have officially confirmed their decision to unconditionally resume their structural cooperation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

VIII. Humanitarian strategy of the United Nations

57. In the third year of the war, the humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo intensified throughout the country and was affecting an increasing proportion of the population. In 2000 one of the main features of the crisis was that the belligerents relentlessly targeted civilians in particular, systematically promoted an insecure environment and deliberately prevented humanitarian organizations from reaching populations increasingly destabilized by their chaotic environment.

58. Another aspect of the crisis was an acute awareness of the threat that the conflict now represented for regional stability. The conflict spilled over into a number of neighbouring countries, such as the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, in the form of refugee flows, unchecked military activities and epidemics. Not only neighbouring countries were affected by these factors, however. The domestic effects were also far-reaching. Population

movements and the presence of great numbers of foreign and Congolese troops meant that the suffering spread even to areas hitherto spared by the conflict. Recently, the impact on the civilian population of a town repeatedly falling into the hands of the opposing forces was noted. The instances of the towns of Pepa and Pweto, where attacks triggered (both civilian and military) refugee flows into Zambia, demonstrates how fierce the fighting was and how terrified the population was of the consequences of such military operations.

59. In early 2001, Ituri once again provided the ultimate image of a lack or decline of political and administrative structures. Exploitation of the population's fears by unscrupulous leaders exacerbated ethnic antagonisms. The disorder and chaos that filled the vacuum at the State level partly explain the high number of fatalities (approximately 400) and highlight the current predicament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A. The consequences of the conflict

60. A horrifying number of people were affected by the conflict. In three years of war, 16 million persons, or 33 per cent of the population, were affected by the war. Early in 2001, a study conducted by the International Rescue Committee showed that approximately 1.7 million, including 600,000 children under 5 years of age, had died as a result of the war, solely in the eastern part of the country. Around 200,000 of these fatalities are attributable to the violence, whereas the rest are attributable to disease, malnutrition and the collapse of health systems. In towns, the food deficit has taken on alarming proportions. It amounts to 1 million tons and is a result of the disruption of traditional supply and trade channels. The consequent increased cost of basic foodstuffs in the context of a widespread drop in household purchasing power has added to the distress of the Congolese population, 70 per cent of whom have under $1 per day to live on.

61. Frequent movements have ruined the lives of millions of people. In North and South Kivu alone 49.5 per cent of this category of population is to be found. There is a total of 2 million displaced persons, the majority of whom are women and children who have been obliged to flee their homes and fields, leaving all their possessions behind them. Most of them have been taken in by families, where their presence exerts great pressure on already meagre resources. This situation is the outcome of a campaign of terror conducted by the military and the militias, which target defenceless civilians.

62. Some 300,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo have fled to neighbouring countries. Approximately 100,000 refugees who fled the fighting in Equateur province took refuge in the Republic of the Congo, and some 10,000 took refuge in the Central African Republic. In recent weeks, 5,000 persons have fled to Zambia from Katanga.

63. In some parts of the country, such as Equateur province, the level of dehumanization reached beggars belief: some 200,000 persons have taken refuge in the forests so as to maintain a modicum of dignity; they now have no clothing and dare not appear either at church or in a hospital and are unwilling to send their children to school; they are living in primitive conditions, and humanitarian assistance is not reaching them.

B. The constraints encountered

64. Paradoxically, although a growing number of people are falling victim to the war and need assistance, the humanitarian agencies have been deliberately prevented from reaching the victims and providing the assistance needed in order to save lives. This situation has been exacerbated by logistical difficulties, which have prevented assistance from reaching some cases. The obstacles in question have arisen both in government areas (administrative difficulties) and rebel areas (insecurity). In that connection, 30,000 displaced persons in South Equateur and 150,000 in North Katanga have gone without assistance in the course of the current year. Furthermore, as a result of the magnitude of the Congolese crisis, the humanitarian agencies have been short of financial resources. Only 61 per cent of the consolidated appeal for 2000, which was set at $71.4 million, was covered. Of the 16 million persons affected by the crisis, only 50 per cent received humanitarian assistance, and often only intermittently.

C. Humanitarian strategy of the United Nations

65. For the humanitarian community in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2000 was marked by a determined effort to reduce and mitigate the devastating effects of the war. Despite the enormous difficulties referred to, the results achieved were considerable. The year 2001 was marked by the determination to expand the humanitarian arena, which was facilitated by the decision of President Joseph Kabila to give humanitarian workers unimpeded access to the most vulnerable population groups. However, such an expansion was obstructed by such other factors as insecurity, the disastrous condition of infrastructure and the financial cost of assistance. With the extension of the humanitarian arena, new needs have been identified that cannot be met by increasing capacity on the ground and by means of a joint strategy on the part of all humanitarian agencies for the delivery of assistance.

66. The United Nations continued to endeavour to meet the crisis by ensuring an extensive presence throughout all 11 provinces. Considerable success was achieved through some kinds of intervention regarded as hallowed causes because intervention could take place on both sides of the front line, and they were the motive for a halt in the fighting in recognition of their universality and also as a token of respect for the action undertaken. It was in that spirit that the following operations were carried out by the agencies in the United Nations system:

(a) Through national immunization days it was possible to immunize over 10 million children under 5 years of age. The fact that it was possible to conduct the immunization campaign in a relatively satisfactory manner almost everywhere in the country is quite miraculous and indicative of the desire of parents and Congolese health professionals to cling to a certain universal normality;

(b) Approximately 28,000 students had their academic year validated, thanks to the delivery of examination papers to them and the subsequent channelling of their results from the provinces to Kinshasa;

(c) The distribution of seeds and agricultural implements meant that approximately 300,000 families could once again earn their livelihood;

(d) Emergency humanitarian interventions could be organized on both sides of the front line so as to come to the aid of the populations in question following the Kisangani fighting. OCHA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, with logistic support from MONUC, organized the biggest airlift ever put in place by the United Nations since the 1998 war. Through this operation Kisangani could be supplied with approximately 400 tons of medical equipment and foodstuffs. Through the rapid deployment of humanitarian personnel, it was possible to provide emergency assistance to the population of Kisangani and some 67,000 displaced persons. Four days after this operation began, 14 tons of machine oil had been transported to Kisangani to repair the generator there, which meant that the entire town could then be supplied with electric power;

(e) The principle of national solidarity could be implemented as a result of operations that could promote the unity of the Congolese nation and a concern for human priorities over and above the conflict. Epidemiologists could thus be transferred to Durba and Watsa for the purpose of identifying the haemorrhagic fever virus and combating it. Protective materials were put in place at the main health centres;

(f) In the framework of preparations for the national immunization days, a joint mission to Gemena and Gbadolite was conducted with WHO and UNICEF representatives. On that occasion, vaccines were distributed and negotiations taken up with the MLC authorities to ensure respect for the "days of tranquillity". Medical kits and medicines were put in place at most health centres in the two locations;

(g) MONUC, international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies and programmes are actively involved in efforts to ensure resumption of river navigation for both humanitarian and trade purposes, the latter in order to promote trade and commercial flows between deficit and surplus areas. In that connection, the departure of humanitarian barges should make possible an exchange of essential articles across the front line and subsequently facilitate the process of setting up confidence-building machinery and mechanisms for promoting access with a view to expanding the humanitarian arena;

(h) The humanitarian component of MONUC, in close cooperation with the new MONUC disarmament, demobilization, reintegration,

resettlement and repatriation unit, is engaged in preparing a programme for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, resettlement and repatriation of child soldiers. At the same time, the agencies in the United Nations system are considering the matter in a broader context so as to include other elements relating to the demobilization, social and economic reintegration and resettlement of former combatants;

(i) Humanitarian coordination by means of information processing and the formulation of joint strategies based on the areas of competence of each humanitarian agency and the joint conduct of missions and studies has been strengthened, which has led to a greater understanding of the human situation and the identification of appropriate strategies.

67. Mobilization of resources is an obstacle to the implementation of the strategy. The consolidated appeal for 2001 amounts to $139.5 million, a sum that falls far short of requirements, in view of the extent of the human distress involved. The appeal is based on a new strategy targeting various levels of intervention, ranging from food security for households and more extensive programmes of intervention in the area of health. The chief objective is to save as many lives as possible, to support community strategies for surviving and adjusting to the crisis and to promote the circulation of goods and individuals. One of the aims of the appeal is to identify the various layers of vulnerability so as to facilitate more targeted interventions on the part of the humanitarian community. Lastly, within the framework of the appeal, seeking solutions that go beyond humanitarian assistance *stricto sensu* is encouraged. In view of the enormous agricultural potential of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, initiatives designed to support trade on both sides of the front line or to help surplus regions supply deficit areas will be encouraged by developing traffic and trade on the Congo River and ensuring security in that connection.

68. Now more than ever, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is undergoing a severe and complex crisis that is a component of a regional scenario. The population is exhausted after three years of war. Chronic insecurity, the decline of health structures, food shortages and the economic crisis have worn down the remaining will to survive. Shortcomings in terms of governance, an area in which the Congolese have always found creative ways of surviving, have become an insurmountable obstacle that has broken their will and destroyed their faith in the future. However, recent political changes and the determination of the new Congolese Government to restore peace opens up new prospects for the humanitarian agencies. These prospects should be based on the process of setting up working groups in the various areas of the country to identify a common strategy for intervention with a view to providing a coordinated response and meeting the needs identified more effectively. The current context will thus enable the humanitarian agencies to deal with a whole series of more specific problems that are of vital importance for the reconstruction of the country; this will be achieved by setting up special programmes for such purposes as demobilizing and reintegrating child soldiers or resettling displaced persons and refugees. Needless to say, the corollary of humanitarian expansion is greater involvement on the part of donors in providing financial resources but also a more coordinated approach.

IX. Prospects for reconstruction

69. Last year, the report submitted to the General Assembly stressed that the current crisis should not obscure the opportunities for change available to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This warning is even more apt now that hope has been generated by the desire of the Congolese to reach agreement on the collective administration of their country. If it does in fact take place, the opening-up advocated by the new authorities at both the political and economic levels, and with respect to human rights, offers a real opportunity to end the crisis.

70. The determination of the United Nations to ensure the rapid departure of the foreign armed forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is also a great source of hope for the return to a lasting peace. To overcome the impending crisis, substantial assistance from the international community is essential for the country's reconstruction endeavour, in keeping with the priority themes outlined in the previous report (A/55/319), which must still be taken into account. Once again, they were as follows:

Theme 1: Peace, security and reconciliation

71. It is recognized that the introduction of a framework of peace and reconciliation is a sine qua

non for the creation of an environment conducive to the rehabilitation and recovery of the human development process. The activities to be undertaken in this area must necessarily reflect the political decision makers' will to strengthen the peace process. This dynamic should be supported by the provision of the appropriate material and technical resources to the various bodies established to maintain this process.

Theme 2: Preparing a strategy to end the crisis

72. The process for ending the crisis on which the Congolese Government appears to have embarked is the approach recommended to it by the Bretton Woods institutions, consisting of the following stages:

(a) Implementation for one year of an interim programme monitored by IMF with as performance criteria macroeconomic stabilization and payment of arrears vis-à-vis IMF (possibly by means of a bridge loan);

(b) Preparation under the interim programme of a strategic framework for poverty alleviation by means of a national concerted effort supported by the development partners;

(c) Implementation of a three-year programme based on the strategic framework for poverty alleviation and supported by the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, and possibly also by debt forgiveness under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative.

73. The ongoing discussions between the Congolese Government and the Bretton Woods institutions indicate that the launching of the first stage is already being seriously hindered by external financing difficulties, given the wait-and-see attitude being maintained by most donors and other sources of financing. The country must therefore as a matter of priority be given assistance in mobilizing resources by means of many-pronged strategies ranging from diplomatic action to improve its image, and action to promote peace and good governance, to quality sectoral and macroeconomic programmes.

74. A coordinated approach is required in order to achieve this, at least at the level of the United Nations system. Synergy and complementarity of the action taken by the various agencies will be decisive in mobilizing sufficient funds both to meet the challenges represented by the problems of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to seize the opportunities offered by the new political, economic and military situation. The strategy for ending the crisis itself must combine humanitarian action and intervention for the purpose of rehabilitation and development. Emphasis must be placed on action to strengthen grass-roots communities so as to enable them to develop and implement their own projects for ending the crisis, particularly in the following priority areas: resettlement of displaced persons, demobilization and integration of ex-combatants, HIV/AIDS control and rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure (such as schools, hospitals and minor roads). Such measures must be combined with more traditional, medium-term intervention in the framework of a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy. The United Nations system can already be called on to prepare the various components (statistics, databases and a participatory process) needed in order to develop the strategy. The Congolese Government can thus be helped to devise its own framework for intervention and for the coordination of all donors and other sources of financing.

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Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Note by the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991. A mechanism for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Agenda is contained in section II, paragraphs 42 to 48, of the annex to the resolution. In its resolution 51/32 on the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda, the Assembly decided to conduct the final review and appraisal of the programme in 2002.

2. In its resolution 54/234 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the General Assembly also decided to consider at its fifty-sixth session the modalities for undertaking the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda, taking into account the mid-term review and agreed conclusions 1999/2 of the Economic and Social Council. The Assembly reaffirmed this decision in its resolution 55/216.

3. The final review and appraisal of the New Agenda is an occasion for the General Assembly and the international community to take stock of efforts made by the African countries themselves and the international community at large to foster the development of the continent. It is also an opportunity for the Assembly to deliberate and provide guidelines on future actions and approaches to ensure effective coordination of poverty eradication and sustainable development efforts in Africa.

II. Evaluation of the New Agenda

4. In its 1999/2 agreed conclusions, the Economic and Social Council requested that the Secretary-General commission an independent evaluation of the New Agenda, including its relationship with other initiatives. The Council called for the evaluation to show clearly achievements and shortcomings in overall performance, particularly in regard to identified priority areas and in meeting agreed targets. It also requested that the evaluation make recommendations for future action, including consideration of successor arrangements. In its resolution 54/234, the General Assembly stressed the paramount importance for the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda of an

* A/56/150.

** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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independent evaluation that should include a thorough review of existing initiatives on Africa. In its resolution 55/216, the Assembly requested that the independent evaluation of the New Agenda, which should be submitted to it by 31 May 2002, also take into account section VII of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2).

5. At its forty-sixth session, in June 2001, the Committee for Programme and Coordination requested that the various reports related to the final evaluation of the New Agenda should, inter alia present an assessment of all the activities carried out by all partners concerned in the various areas covered by the New Agenda and identify successes, obstacles, failures and lessons learned. The impact and implications of the activities on the development of Africa in the light of the commitments, responsibilities and objectives initially set by the New Agenda should be indicated as well. The Committee also requested that concrete proposals on the successor arrangements to the New Agenda be put forward. Such proposals should include effective coordination measures at the international, regional, subregional and national levels.[1]

6. The independent and high-level quality evaluation of the New Agenda and related initiatives, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/217, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, has been launched. The Secretary-General has established a panel composed of 12 independent personalities from Africa and the international community to oversee this evaluation. The panel is scheduled to hold its first meeting in September 2001 to review the terms of reference and to agree on the calendar and process of the evaluation, which will be undertaken by a team of four independent experts under its supervision. The panel will also meet in March 2002 to discuss the draft evaluation report before it is finalized and submitted to the Assembly by 31 May 2002.

III. Final review and appraisal of the New Agenda by the General Assembly

7. It may be recalled that in 1984 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued a declaration on the critical economic situation in Africa that led to the convening of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, which adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. That programme was based on Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, which was derived from the Lagos Plan of Action (A/S-11/14, annex I). Subsequently, the New Agenda was developed on the basis of a memorandum (A/46/280, annex) prepared by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa and submitted to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

8. The recent initiatives taken by African countries to assume and assert ownership of their development, together with their attempt to redefine the terms and conditions of partnership with the international community, led to the adoption of the New African Initiative in July 2001 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU. In the declaration it adopted on 18 July 2001 during the high-level segment of its session of 2001, the Economic and Social Council called on the United Nations system and the international community to support the New African Initiative and invited the Secretary-General to take the requisite measures to ensure the effective and coordinated response of the United Nations system to the Initiative.

9. In the statement he made at the opening of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on 16 July 2001, the Secretary-General said the United Nations would fully support the New African Initiative and expressed the need to put an end to the multiplicity of initiatives on Africa. This is in line with the long and well-established policy of the United Nations to support African initiatives.

10. In the statement delivered on 17 July 2001 on behalf of the African Group of States during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, it was stressed that the review of the implementation of the New Agenda would provide the international community with the opportunity to assess the performance of African countries and the international support provided to them during the past decade in a comprehensive manner. It would be the occasion where the future course of action for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including reducing poverty by half by the year 2015 in Africa, could be determined. Furthermore, it was stated that the final review and appraisal would be a comprehensive

undertaking which would determine the future course of action of the international community with regard to African development and, in that context, help to determine the role of the United Nations system in support of Africa.

11. The General Assembly may wish to consider adopting the same modality applied for the mid-term review of the New Agenda and used in the past to carry out the mid-term and the final reviews and appraisals of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, the predecessor programme to the New Agenda, which involved the establishment by the Assembly of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. At its fifty-sixth session, the Assembly may thus wish to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole to carry out the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda and submit its report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session for its decision.

12. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole could hold an organizational session in early June 2002 and a substantive session in September 2002 shortly before the close of the fifty-sixth session. The documents which could assist the General Assembly in the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda could include the report on the independent evaluation to be submitted by 31 May 2002, a note by the Secretary-General providing any views he may have on the evaluation report and reports on or assessments of the implementation of the New Agenda by OAU or its successor, the African Union, and the community of non-governmental organizations.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/56/16), para. 140.